

FORTUNE/STATE DEPARTMENT
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP
MENTEE SPOTLIGHT:



Brigitte Dzogbenuku

Brigitte Dzogbenuku is the 39-year old General Manager of Aviation Social Centre, a fitness and business center in Accra, Ghana with modern facilities and equipment, including tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts. The center also hosts and manages entertainment events. While the center serves clients of all ages, it especially seeks to inspire youth to learn teamwork and fitness skills through sports. Brigitte volunteers to give presentations on fitness, etiquette and manners to student groups and clubs. She also maintains a column on manners and etiquette in a Ghanaian weekly newspaper called *The Mirror*. She speaks fluent Kiswahili and French, along with about 3 other Ghanaian languages. She is a single mother with a four year old son and an avid tennis player.

As part of the 2008 [FORTUNE/U.S. State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership](#), Ms. Dzogbenuku had the opportunity to be mentored by Donna Orender, the President of the [Women's National Basketball Association](#). As a result of her mentorship, Brigitte saw the opportunities that sports holds as a business and just as importantly the power of sports to transform lives. Like many of her fellow alumnae, Brigitte is giving back to her community by using sports to educate and inspire young girls in her community.

On her FORTUNE Exchange Experience:

"It was a very fulfilling as well as enlightening experience for me. I hadn't visited the U.S. for over 25 years, and to be afforded the opportunity of meeting all those powerful women and learning from them was a real privilege."

"It was impressive to see that these women were all willing to make a difference in our lives, and therefore other peoples' lives - they were willing to give back. They were willing to take time off their busy schedules to invest in the lives of 35 women they knew from nowhere. The spirit of giving back, in order to make someone's life better, to grow yet another 'strong' woman in my community was kindled greatly in me."

Most Rewarding Professional Experience:

“The most professionally rewarding part of the exchange was the opportunity to learn how the WNBA works: understanding that basketball was big business and could be replicated on a smaller scale in Ghana. The opportunity to visit the USTA also gave me the chance to see how the business of tennis works.”

Most Rewarding Personal Experience:

“Every experience was personally rewarding. Meeting 34 other ladies from all over the world and knowing they had become part of my network of friends, while all the other mentors, speakers and persons involved in the programme also had a similarly positive impact on me. I couldn't help being 'star struck' at the Most Powerful Women's dinner, of course, in the company of all those accomplished women.”

On Giving Back:

“I have started a girls basketball club called Hoop Sistas, which meets on Sundays to learn/play basketball and learn from other accomplished women in their community. It is also an avenue to encourage education and healthy living in young women.”

On how her fellow participants influenced her:

“I was greatly impressed by the drive which each had to make a difference in their community and their quest for excelling.”

Future Goals:

“After my experience and my visit to the US Open, I would like to pursue Sports Management and Marketing in order to head the Tennis and Basketball associations in Ghana, both of which are quite dormant. While pursuing this, in the meantime, I wish to make an impact in the lives of girls through these sports.”